

III. REMARKS

1. Claims 1-18 remain in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5-8, 11, 12, and 16-18 have been amended.

2. The claims have been amended to clarify the meaning of the terms "input device" and "input means." The term "input device" generally refers to the whole device (mobile phone, PDA, etc.) whereas "input means" generally refers to a part of the input device (keyboard, touch screen, etc.). The input device can adopt three essentially different configurations (i.e. closed as in Fig.1, partly opened as in Fig. 3, and fully opened as in Fig. 4). The input means, however, can adopt two essentially different configurations (i.e. compacted (e.g. wound into roll and hidden in a storage space) as in Fig. 1 and Fig. 3, and extended as in Fig. 4).

3. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-7 are patentable over the combination of Kikinis (US 5,220,521) and Bowen (US 5,644,338).

3.1 The combination of Kikinis and Bowen fails to disclose or suggest that in the first state and in the second state as defined in claim 1, the flexible input means has been retracted into a housing and the functionality of the flexible input means is unavailable for a user. There is no disclosure in either reference related to this feature.

3.2 The combination of Kikinis and Bowen also fails to disclose or suggest that in the third state as defined in claim 1, the flexible input means has been extracted from the housing by the sliding movement and the functionality of the flexible input means is available for a user. There is no disclosure in either

reference related to a sliding movement associated with a third state of an electronic input device where an input means is extracted from a housing and its functionality is available for a user.

3.3 The combination of Kikinis and Bowen further fails to disclose or suggest that in the second state at least part of the functionality of the electronic input device is available for a user, and in the third state the available functionality of the electronic input device is extended. There is no disclosure in either reference related an extended functionality of an electronic input device in a third state as defined by claim 1.

The Office action refers to column 7, lines 46-54 of Bowen as defining a second state, and to column 8, lines 17-19 and 34-38 of Bowen as defining a third state. Column 7, lines 46-54 relates to Fig. 11 and column 8, lines 17-19 and 34-38 relates to Fig. 15. As can be seen by comparing Figures 11 and 15, they are essentially the same. The only difference is that in Fig. 11 a tracking ball - like a pointing device is used, whereas in Fig 15 a mouse is used. Configuration of the actual keyboard and its associated functionalities remain the same in both figures. Bowen essentially discloses an empty space between two halves of a keyboard, and an empty space cannot be considered equal to "input means" in the sense the term "input means" is used in the present application.

Claims 2-7 depend from claim 1 and therefore are also patentable over the combination of Kikinis and Bowen.

4. Claims 8-11 are patentable over Kikinis in view of Bowen, and further in view of Kinya et al. (JP 04-178684, hereinafter "Kinya").

Claim 8 depends from claim 1. Kinya discloses a flexible display medium that may be rolled up into a housing. However, Kinya fails to provide the features lacking in Kikinis and Bowen, that is:

that the flexible input means has been retracted into a housing and the functionality of the flexible input means is unavailable for a user in the first and second state;

that in the third state the flexible input means has been extracted from the housing by the sliding movement and the functionality of the flexible input means is available for a user; and

that in the second state at least part of the functionality of the electronic input device is available for a user, and in the third state the available functionality of the electronic input device is extended.

Because the combination of Kikinis, Bowen, and Kinya fail to disclose or suggest these features, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Kikinis, Bowen, and Kinya fails to render claims 8-11 unpatentable.

5. Claims 12-15 are patentable over the combination of Bowen, and Kinya, further in view of Furuya et al. (JP 06-164440, hereinafter "Furuya").

Furuya fails to disclose the features that are not disclosed or suggested by Kikinis, Bowen, and Kinya, listed above.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Kikinis, Bowen, Kinya, and Furuya fails to render claims 12-15 unpatentable.

6. Claims 16, 17, and 18 are patentable over the combination of Kinya and Bowen.

Claims 16, 17 and 18 are method claims related to an electronic input device with features similar to those of claim 1, and thus are patentable for the same reasons argued in support of claim 1 above.

At least for these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 16, 17, and 18 are patentable over the combination of Kinya and Bowen.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.